142 The skin is in all tints, from light maroon to dark black. The height is a little above average . . .

181 "The Bambara is a bumpkin; he is dull and slow to understand, but he clings to his ideas, doubtless rare, and has an insurmountable stubbornness. He is patient; he endures every tyranny and submits to every calamity with a stupefying resignation. But when he has resolved to exact vengeance by force or by exercising his rights, nothing can stop him. He does not know how to present himself, he has trouble explaining himself, he always goes on interminably before coming to the point, and even though speaking deliberately, his eyes averted or fixed on the ground, he only pronounces half of the words, which makes it difficult to understand him."

These few extracts at least have the merit of giving a measure of the extent to which the Bambara is incomprehensible to the White.

II. Refutation of the Traditional Theory

The Bambara is, in fact, intelligent, patient, and stubborn, so many qualities indispensable for living in this difficult country. We have been able to show, in the course of this study, how coherent his metaphysical system was, its intellectual rigor, and how it influenced all social and economic life. But we must insist on this point: such a system is not the fruit of the idle speculations of a few privileged minds; it is lived by all, understood in its parts by all members of the society and in its totality by numerous old men.

153 The absence of a system of writing like our own obliges the
181 Bambara to possess all this knowledge himself, and his prodigious memory astonishes the White. But the most remarkable thing in his intellectual makeup is the facility with which he has managed to seize our modes of thought, so different from his traditional thought, and to assimilate our vision of the world; there is no great school in France that is not within his reach. The astonishing ease with which he is able to assimilate our language and our thought is adequate proof of the suppleness of his mind which has always been trained in all the speculative subtleties.

181 The stubbornness he exhibits in certain cases is often his only manner of defending his traditions, which are the very stuff of his life. These traditions were formed in the course of thousands of years of experience in a hard country where life is not a natural thing.